

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 8-15 and 19-20 are pending in the present application.

Claims 7 and 16-18 are canceled. Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application on canceled claims 16-18.

Claims 1 and 19 are amended to delete organo-silicon compounds and to recite that the liquid primer composition comprises one or more silsesquioxanes.

Claims 3-6 are withdrawn from consideration, however, if claim 1 is found allowable, the restriction requirement should be withdrawn. See MPEP §809 and §809.03.

Claims 1-2, 8-15 and 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over WO 02/24974 taken in view of U.S. 6,221,176 to Merchant et al. and further in view of Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary, Twelfth Edition, 1991. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

WO 02/24974 alone or in combination with Merchant et al. and Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary do not teach or suggest a liquid primer composition comprising one or more silsesquioxanes and an organic polymer, an organic oligomer, an organic monomer, or mixtures thereof for treating a metal surface as recited in present claims 1 and 19. All three documents are totally silent on silsesquioxanes. Accordingly, claims 1-2, 8-15 and 19-20 would not have been obvious over the applied documents.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-2, 8-15 and 19-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over WO 02/24974 taken in view of U.S. 6,221,176 to Merchant et al. and further in view of Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary, Twelfth Edition.

Favorable consideration and allowance of claims 1, 2, 8-15, 19 and 20 are earnestly solicited.

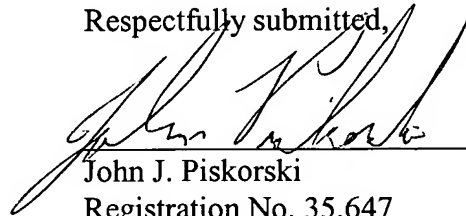
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Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this response or this application, or should she believe this application is for any reason not yet in condition for allowance, she is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned at the number set forth below to expedite allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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